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Commander, Second Fleet Changes Command

NORFOLK, Va. – Vice Adm. Marty Chanik relieved Vice Adm. Mark Fitzgerald and assumed all responsibilities as Commander, Second Fleet and Director, Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Center of Excellence during a change of command ceremony at Second Fleet Headquarters in Norfolk Nov. 28.

Fitzgerald departs Second Fleet for Washington D.C. to become the Director, Navy Staff in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

Fitzgerald assumed command of Second Fleet in October 2004, providing six Carrier Strike Groups, five Expeditionary Strike Groups, and seven Surface Strike Groups in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Maritime Security Operations.

During his tenure, Fitzgerald equipped Second Fleet to serve as a Maritime Headquarters with a Maritime Operation Center (MOC) bringing unprecedented clarity and coordination to maritime battlespace, and preparing for upcoming certification as a Joint Task Force headquarters.

“I would say that we’ve redefined the Navy in several ways,” Fitzgerald said. “We’ve changed the way we do business in the coalition world. We’ve changed our procurement strategies in Washington around the MOC. We’ve – most importantly – made the Navy relevant to our customers, who are the joint world. We are able to now plan – synchronize – our effects, and do business in a joint way.”

Fitzgerald also guided the two-year process to establish the Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Center of Excellence, helping to synchronize NATO and U.S. maritime efforts.

“Second Fleet found itself at the nexus of the Navy, the Joint and the NATO transformation worlds, and that was a challenge that we relished,” Fitzgerald said.

Fitzgerald was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his accomplishments.

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Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Admiral John B. Nathman presided over the ceremony, praising Fitzgerald's efforts, and welcoming Chanik.

"Admiral Chanik will provide the leadership and the direction necessary to continue preparing Navy forces to go where they are needed most," said Nathman. "We have the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. We do have the Global War on Terror. And more and more (we must continue) to support and preserve freedom on the high seas and to dissuade (and) deter enemies or ensure friends from the sea."

Chanik comes to Second Fleet from Director, Force Structure, Resources and Assessment (J8) on the Joint Staff. He is a 1973 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and a native of Newport, R.I..

Chanik addressed his speech to the staff of Second Fleet saying, "Commander Second Fleet has a great reputation for working difficult issues and leading change. There's no doubt in my mind that Second Fleet will be instrumental in leading the way ahead. I look forward to working with each and every one of you as we continue to provide a resource to our nation that is second to none."

During his 33-year career, Chanik has served with distinction at sea and ashore. Chanik has amassed more than 4,800 flight hours and 850 carrier arrested landings. At sea, he has commanded Fighter Squadron 84 (VF 84), the "Jolly Rogers," USS Camden (AOE 2), USS Enterprise (CVN 65), and Carrier Group Three aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70).

Ashore, he served at the Naval Fighter Weapons School (Top Gun) as an instructor in graduate level tactics; on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations as Head, Aviation Plans and Requirements and, later, as the Director, Programming Division; and as the Deputy Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia.

His decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V," and various service and campaign awards.

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